

STRONGER TOGETHER



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MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR RELEASE: 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 4, 2005

MEDIA RELEASE

Theatrical professionals Coalition installs dramatic Blue Man Boycott banner on Yonge Street; Clear Channel slammed for legal threats against information picket.

TORONTO – The Blue Man Boycott Coalition took their campaign for recognition by the controversial theatrical production to the next level today, beginning with the Yonge Street installation of a vivid 700-square foot banner less than one block from the Panasonic Theatre, currently under construction.

The banner dramatically challenges Blue Man Group's refusal to cooperate with the representative organizations long recognized by every major theatrical producer in Toronto

"Toronto has become one of the world's great theatrical cities because of the high level of cooperation between theatrical producers and those who make the productions come to life," said Susan Wallace, Executive Director of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association. "Blue Man Group does not want to be part of that cooperative tradition but wants to take advantage of all that we have achieved here. We cannot and will not allow them to do this. We are stepping up our boycott efforts, which are already supported by organizations representing millions of potential ticket buyers."

Panasonic Canada and its parent company, Japanese electronics juggernaut Matsushita Electric, also came under fire for its association with Blue Man Group, which intends a long run at the Panasonic Theatre. Panasonic Canada has spurned the Coalition's request for a meeting to discuss the issue.

"We are putting Panasonic on public notice," said Bill Skolnik, Executive Director of the Toronto Musicians' Association. "If they are so keen to be associated with this anti-artist, anti-union production, they must expect to be regarded in the same light as Blue Man Group."

Panasonic Theatre owner Clear Channel Communications was denounced for its attempt to mute the press conference and information picket. Late Tuesday, Clear

Channel's law firm, Goodmans LLP, faxed a letter to the Coalition partners threatening legal action against the organizations and their officials if today's activities interfered in any way with the theatre's renovations. Former Ontario Premier Bob Rae is a partner in Goodmans, though he is not personally acting as legal counsel for Clear Channel.

"Clear Channel may be the biggest radio broadcaster in the United States but it is still subject to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms," said Kevin Mahoney of Local 58 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE). "We will not be intimidated and we will not be silenced."

For further information: or to arrange interviews with spokespersons for the Coalition, contact: Victoria Lord - (416) 484-9047 & (647) 519-8577; Additional contact: Bill Reno - (416) 223-7366